REFORMATION TODAY '78

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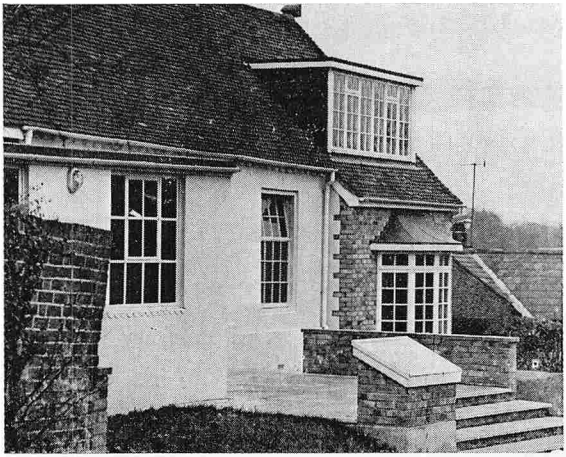

CUCKFIELD BAPTIST CHAPEL WAS ERECTED IN 1772. ITS FORTUNES FLUCTUATED through the years and it was finally closed when the membership was reduced to one. In 1957 the dilapidated state of the structure and the absence of a congregation prompted the trustees to sell the property but on the intervention of the Tabernacle Strict Baptist Chapel, Brighton the property was made fit for worship, a Sunday School was started and evening services were held.

In 1962 Mr. Erroll Hulse accepted an invitation to become part-time pastor and a church was formed of twelve baptised believers. Progress was at first slow but in 1963 the membership began to increase. In 1967 Mr. Hulse became full-time pastor and in 1968 the building was extended to accommodate the enlarged congregations and overflow conditions prevail from time to time. Our parking problems were solved by renting and then purchasing a near-by field. In the providence of God we have now bought the cottage adjacent to the chapel thus providing ample scope for future extensions and the immediate provision of Sunday School classrooms.

The church has grown through conversions and families moving into the area. It has been blessed too when families have moved away and integrated with other churches. We count it a privilege to welcome visitors from home and abroad, many of whom in the past have contacted us through the medium of this magazine which is published under the auspices of the church. S. D. Hogwood.

BOUND VOLUME

HAVE YOU LOST OR PASSED ON YOUR COPIES OF *Reformation Today*? DO YOU want to recover these because of the interesting articles you want to keep on file?

Many of our subscribers and friends are constantly writing to us asking for back copies of the magazine. Readers will be glad to know that *Reformation Today* has now bound together into one volume issues 25-36. These are now available. The price is £2.75 per volume including postage, and orders should be sent to the editor or to one of our agents. To insure receiving a copy order today. Binders are available at £1.65 including postage.

Editorial

God's attitude towards unbelievers

A NUMBER OF MOTIVES WORK TOGETHER IN HARMONY TO INSPIRE EVANGELISM. There is the encouragement that the Lord is with us as we endeavour to fulfil the great commission. There is the election of the Father which guarantees ultimate success. There is the wonder and glory of the Holy Spirit's work as he uses human means to add to the churches. Along with these motives it is essential to maintain an attitude of love, compassion and urgency toward unbelievers. Upon this theme pastor Walter Chantry expounds with clarity, warmth and relevance. He is one of the speakers at the Leicester Ministers' Conference this year, April 10th-13th, organised by the Banner of Truth Trust.

Robert Haldane and the Revival in Geneva

The account of the revival in Geneva by John J. Murray appeared several years ago in the Evangelical Library *Bulletin*. It reminds us of the elementary characteristics of true revival and is designed to stimulate interest in Robert Haldane whose life is outlined by Ian Tallach.

Marxism—a terrible and ruthless system (see p. 26 about cover picture).

The atrocities committed by Communist régimes in Asia have been frequently and fully reported in both the Secular and Christian Press. The *Life of Faith* has provided an outstanding service by giving news from around the world, Herbert F. Stevenson having been the editor for 42 years. The paper began in 1874 as a monthly, and became a weekly in 1892. Owing to economic pressures it is now reverting to a monthly appearance. The article by Paul E. Kauffman first appeared in the *Life of Faith*.

Lord Elton, an opposition spokesman on foreign affairs, recently published a summary of the situation in the Far East in the *Daily Telegraph*. He said that over 142,000 refugees have come into Thailand from Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia in the past two and a half years. The most savage of the régimes is that in *Cambodia*. Since the *Khmer Rouge* have seized power, upwards of one and a half million are reported killed by violence and starvation. Out of a population of seven million that is a figure of appalling dimensions.

The overall situation should be much in the prayers of believers.

South Africa

Letters have been received from South Africans deploring the brutality of the police which was exposed in the recent Biko trial.

The aforementioned editor, Mr. Stevenson, typical of the press throughout the world declared, 'no truly civilised country could for one moment allow cruelty such as is practised by the South African police. Mr. Vorster has the power to control them, but will not act. The dreadful conclusion is irresistible that this is part of Government policy'. Mr. Vorster may well be waiting for the storm to abate before surprising the world with some

reformation. Also we have to wait and see if the churches will exert influence with regard to the policy adverted to by Mr. Stevenson.

Besides letters a document has been received which has been compiled by South Africans of Calvinistic persuasion. It is called *The Koinonia Declaration* (obtainable from *Koinonia*, Sitastraat 10, Potchefstroom, 2520). This is a wise and moderate statement which reveals an intimate and detailed knowledge of the internal situation and which calls for reformation which is biblical, compassionate and practical. Many South Africans are irked by wholesale condemnation of the government's policies which overlooks positive achievements. This reminds us that we need to be sure of our facts and to concentrate on appealing to the conscience on Scriptural grounds which alone for true Christians will carry weight. In some countries there are statesmen who outwardly appear to have a Christian profession. We must never be deceived by that, or expect too much, because we may be disappointed.

Column of comment for booklovers

Different reasons have dictated the exclusion of a number of new books. A number await adequate attention. Some are omitted for negative reasons. Sadly, Carl G. Kromminga's *Bringing God's News to Neighbours* (Pres. and Ref.) is singled out for criticism here. It is a university thesis rather than a book. Just about every scholar is quoted from Barth to Newbigin. One looks in vain for a moving illustration or a stirring call to duty. We need books suitable for laymen which will arouse them on the immensely important subject suggested by the title. There is far too much service rendered to gain the approbation of scholars. Anyone would think that they are going to hand out the rewards at the great judgment day!

Too late to include in the columns as we went to press are comments on a production of papers on the subject of the Charismata given at a British Evangelical Council study conference. In typed format, these are available from the B.E.C., 21 Woodstock Road, St. Albans, Herts. (£1.00 plus postage). The papers are useful and interesting to read. Of the five contributors, Neil Richards and Jack MacLeod expound along the lines of Biblical Theology. The power and authority of that essential approach comes through. Graham Daniel and Ben White argue the Pentecostal case clearly. Peter Naylor helpfully expounds on the different spiritual gifts.

From Paternosters comes a useful and relevant paperback *Youth, Brainwashing and the Extremist Cults* by Ronald Enroth. Hare Krishna, Children of God, the Alamo Sect, the Love Family, the Unification Church (very much in the news in the U.K.), The Way, and the Divine Light Mission are described. The basic characteristics of these movements are discussed.

The importance of reading widely and remembering what has been read is illustrated by the fact that comments on 1 John 5:7 in the review article by Drew Garner brought a reminder from a reader on the other side of the world that Dabney discusses this point at length and favours the retention of that text (Dabney, vol. 1, pp. 350-390).

Robert Haldane and the Revival in Geneva

by John J. Murray of Edinburgh

THE BURNING DESIRE IN THE HEART OF ROBERT HALDANE TO SPREAD THE Gospel was ever seeking an outlet. 'For many years,' he writes, 'I had cherished the idea of going to France to promote the knowledge of the Gospel in a country in which I had been three times before as a traveller.' When the termination of the Revolutionary war made this practicable, he set off on a mission which he expected might last 'only six weeks', but which did, in fact, continue for three years, and has forever linked his name with the revival of the Gospel in France and Switzerland.

Finding no opening for his witness in Paris, a city which appeared to be 'involved in Egyptian darkness', he proceeded to Geneva, where he called on the only (as far as he knew) evangelical pastor in the city. 'From all I could learn from him,' says Haldane, 'Geneva was involved in the most deplorable darkness. It was 'an unbroken field of labour', with a 'fallen church'. Calvin, once its chiefest boast and ornament, with his doctrines and works, had been set aside and forgotten, while the pastors and professors were, in general, Arians and Socinians. Some exceptions among them there were, including M. Moulinié, who held the divinity of our Lord Jesus and, I believe, loved and served him according to their light; but that light was so obscure—they were, on the whole, so ignorant, so incapable of rightly dividing the Word of truth, that their preaching was without fruit. They preached neither law nor Gospel fully. . . .' The city which was once 'the glory of the Reformation, the battle-field of light and darkness, the Thermopylae of Protestantism, from whose Alpine heights the light of the Gospel truth streamed forth with brilliant lustre athwart the darkness of Papal superstition', was now about to have its own darkness manifested by the light of a 'foreigner' from a land which itself owed so much to Geneva.

It seemed at first as if there would be no opening for Haldane in Geneva, and he was indeed on the point of leaving the city when he providentially came into contact with a divinity student. This young man brought along a fellow student, and Haldane questioned both of them on their hope of salvation, only to find that 'had they been trained in the schools of Socrates or Plato, and enjoyed no other means of instruction, they could scarcely have been more ignorant of the doctrines of the Gospel'. These two brought six others who were in a similar state of mind. Arrangements were made for them to come together for instruction three times a

week, from six to eight in the evening, at Haldane's residence. He began expounding the Epistle to the Romans. The interest increased, and after about two weeks he was entreated by the other divinity students to begin again. He complied with their request, and during the whole of the winter of 1816-17, and until the close of the summer term, almost all the students attended.

The Beginnings of Revival

The effects were soon manifest. 'God,' he tells us, 'was graciously pleased to accompany his own Word with power. In addition to the general knowledge which all of them acquired, a goodly number soon appeared to be turned to the Lord.' The measure of Haldane's influence can be gauged by the alarm among the pastors and professors. Although he avoided personal attacks, he did not spare the 'errors and blasphemies' propounded by members of the Theological Faculty. They, in turn, began to preach openly against him. The pastors framed a new regulation consisting of certain articles which every student was required to sign before he could be 'set apart for the Gospel ministry in the canton of Geneva'. Its purpose was to exclude from the pulpits of the city the distinctive doctrines of the Gospel brought to light once more by Robert Haldane.

The 'lovers of darkness' were soon to discover that when God lights the lamp of truth, it cannot be extinguished. Men touched with 'the live coal from off the altar' are constrained to declare with the Apostle, 'Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel'. One of the young men—he was already in the ministry—to whom the Word of truth had been blessed was César Malan. It was to him the grace was given to be the first to proclaim from the pulpit of Calvin the old Gospel without reserve. When the doctrine of salvation by grace alone burst in upon the assembled company of Arians and Socinians, it was, as Haldane says, 'like a clap of thunder' or 'like bolts of fire shot from heaven'. 'I shall not soon forget,' he continues, 'the astonished, chagrined, irritated, indignant countenances of some who were present.' Malan descended from the pulpit a rejected man. He walked in his robes from the ancient temple of Calvin to seek the privacy of his own house. On reaching the door he was met by Robert Haldane, who grasped his hand and greeted him with the words: 'Thank God! The Gospel has been once more preached in Geneva!'

In trying to destroy or hinder the work of God the devil very often overreaches himself. This was evident at Geneva. Malan was divested of all his offices, ministerial and academic, and virtually driven from the city. But he was not the only one to suffer for the Gospel. The students who were imbued with the same doctrines, and who now "expounded the Word with unction', were denied ordination. Some like Henri Pyt, Ami Bost, Guers, Gonthier and Empeytaz were driven into secession. Frédéric

Monod obtained ordination in France, and later became the chief founder of the Free Churches in France. Merle d'Aubigné, later to become famous for his *History of the Reformation*, was sent away to Berlin to complete his studies there. But it was in this way that the revival spread throughout many parts of Switzerland and France. In consequence of the bigoted measures adopted at Geneva, the preachers 'went everywhere preaching the Word', and 'the Lord was with them.' The Gospel was once again proclaimed in power, and with 'signs following.'

The widespread effects of Robert Haldane's work at Geneva is a story in itself. 'The evangelical work at Geneva was the child of Haldane; the work of grace of Vaud, the daughter of that at Geneva; and still later, the work in France, to a great extent, the child of that of Geneva and of Vaud. To Robert Haldane was given the grace to accomplish a work, of which only the revelation of the last day will show the extent.' So much for the testimony of Louis Gaussen. One direct outcome of the revival at Geneva was the formation of the Continental Society for propagating the Gospel in Europe, and 'whose operations were attended with a signal blessing'. Dr. Reuben Saillens, in his book *The Soul of France*, maintains that 'pages might be filled with the bare enumeration of the ecclesiastical, benevolent, and evangelistic organisations which came to life between the years 1820 and 1850'.

Characteristics of the Revival

In considering a work of God such as was manifested at Geneva, it is only right that we should seek to learn something from it. We conclude, therefore, with a brief look at the main characteristics of this revival. Dr. Salliens outlines three in his book, and we follow him in this, although taking the points in slightly different order.

1. In this revival the Word of God was central and supreme. Haldane directed the students to the Word as the absolute authority. Prior to his visit the Bible had formed no part of their preparation for the ministry. They had more of the opinions of the heathen philosophers. Haldane 'showed them the folly and daring impiety of summoning their creator to the bar of their reason, and of receiving or ejecting the different parts of his Word, according to its proved decisions'. Much of his own prayer lay in his profound knowledge of the Scriptures. His Bible, Malan observes, was 'literally worn out from having been read and re-read'. His appeal was to the Word alone. Can we expect a revival where the Word of God is not honoured?

2. The second characteristic of this revival was the 'return to Calvinistic doctrine against Pelagianism and Arminianism'. The advantage of systematically expounding the Epistle to the Romans was that each Gospel truth was unfolded in its due proportion. 'In studying this Epistle,' says Haldane, 'I turned their attention to the great doctrines of the Gospel, so successfully revived at the Reformation.' Again he declares: 'It was not

by avoiding controverted subjects and simply dwelling on truths common to professing Christians, as some good men have recommended as the proper course to be pursued on the continent, that I laboured to raise up the fallen standard of the Gospel at Geneva. It was, on the contrary, by not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God . . . it was by dwelling on every doctrine of the Bible, whether it was controverted or not, or however repulsive to the carnal mind.'

3. Finally, there was the paramount emphasis on the necessity of a personal experience of the grace of God. Among the students, Haldane 'constantly inculcated the necessity of their paying regard, in the first place, to their own salvation'. An illustration of this is taken from the experience of Merle d'Aubigné. On hearing Haldane expound on the natural corruption of man, he said, 'Now I do indeed see this doctrine in the Bible.' 'Yes,' replied his teacher, 'but do you see it in your heart?' That simple word went home to his conscience. Haldane's desire for the salvation of souls was intense. 'Oh! if it was necessary to give my blood to bring over those who raise themselves against the Gospel, I would shed it,' he declared to César Malan.

The spiritual darkness in Geneva prior to Haldane's visit is comparable to the condition of many parts of our land today. We need not be unduly discouraged. 'Haldane's Revival' shows us how God can make His truth to spring forth again. A consideration of the good that was accomplished through the ministry of this one man, who was faithful to the Gospel and zealous for its propagation, should stir us up to renewed effort in our individual spheres of witness—however small or insignificant they may appear to be. The weapons of our warfare are mighty *through God* to the pulling down of strongholds. The best way we can honour the memory of Robert Haldane is by glorifying the same Christ he glorified, holding fast the same truth he held fast, and holding forth the same Gospel he held forth, and looking to the same God to bless and own His own Word.

Continued from page 18

terribly conscious of thirst. It will be a thirst that will never be quenched, like that of Dives who looked up from his torment, praying that only a finger be dipped in water and placed on his tongue. The request was refused for him and will be for you if you spurn sincere offers of mercy. Today Jesus says, 'If *any man* thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scriptures have said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of water.' There is no reason for you to wait. He does not ask you to figure out election and reprobation before you come. He does not ask you to measure the extent to which the Spirit has been working in your soul. If you perish in your sins it is still true that God wishes you would turn. 'Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?' is a command and a question given to all outside Christ. Answer it now. Obey it now. Turn to the Lord of grace who entreats you in love and patience.

Can the Invitation System be Accommodated?

In the first study titled 'Compromise or Biblical Accommodation' which is basic to what follows here, Ernest Reisinger and Lawrence Spargimino discussed the question of whether certain practices not in accord with the truth could be accommodated temporarily while more important issues were attended to. While some readers will wish to disagree with the conclusion of this treatise they will not be able to deny that it is well presented in the light of Scripture and is practical, informative and helpful.

The invitation system considered in the light of the principle of Biblical Accommodation

So far we have considered accommodation from a more or less theoretical point of view. We have considered relevant Scriptural data and sought to make some observations regarding the data. At this point, however, it would be prudent for us to seek to apply it to the much discussed matter of the invitation system. To say the least, this is an issue that has caused much controversy, an issue of no small concern because it is an issue which has sharply divided serious Christians who are in agreement regarding the fundamentals of the faith.

The invitation system, one of the techniques of modern mass evangelism, is a rather new method. Charles G. Finney (1792-1875) seems to have been the first professed evangelist to invite people forward to what was called the 'anxious seat'. The invitation system was completely unknown prior to the 1820's, and was not used by any of the great evangelists of past times. Yet, because the invitation system has produced what many would consider to be successful results, its practice has spread to many local churches. Many have come to view the invitation system as an integral part of inviting men to Christ. Regarding Finney and his method, Albert Dod wrote, in 1847:

> Let it be noted that the spirit which we have here pictured, is not the spirit of Mr. Finney alone. Had it belonged to the man, we should not have troubled ourselves to exhibit it. But—as Dr. Beecher called it eight years ago, 'a spirit of fanaticism, of spiritual pride, censoriousness, and insubordination to the order of the Gospel'. Let us not be deluded with the idea that opposition will exasperate and do harm. Under cover of the silence and inaction which this fear has already produced, this fanaticism has spread, until now twelve thousand copies of such a work as these *Lectures on Revivals* are called for by its cravings. And there is danger that this spirit will spread still more extensively.[10]

Clearly, from its inception, some men have opposed the invitation system, and rightly so. As Iain Murray observes, 'By treating two distinct issues, "come to Christ" and "come to the front" as though they were *one*, the tendency of the invitation is to mislead the unconverted in regard to their duty. The real issue is as stated in John 6:29, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." The false is, "Get up now and come to the front." '[11]

Proponents of the invitation system seek to defend their practice by saying that the invitation to come forward is but an act of confessing Christ and is therefore completely consonant with Christ's command, in Matthew 10:32,

'Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.' But 'is Christ here saying that by an *act* of confession we *become* Christians or is he teaching that one indispensable mark of those who are Christians is that they live a life that openly acknowledges him? Is not the modern evangelistic call to confess Christ by coming to the front in order to receive him by faith a reversal of the New Testament order?'[12]

But, one might ask, 'what does all this have to do with the biblical doctrine of accommodation?' Much, because in recent years there has been a marked revival of interest in the doctrines of sovereign grace. Those who would subscribe to these doctrines hold a theology which cannot comfortably live with the invitation system as it is currently practised. The real issue, therefore, is rooted not merely in a different methodology—no, it is far deeper than that. The real issue is one of theology. The proponents of the invitation system confuse human responsibility with free will. They make the two necessary concomitants of each other. Further, because they have an inadequate conception of the consequences of man's fall into sin, they have, as a result, departed from the biblical meaning of grace, and have overthrown the true doctrine of the new birth.

One of the results of this dissemination of truth regarding grace and salvation is that men who adhere to these doctrines are getting opportunities to pastor in churches where congregations still have some false assumptions regarding evangelism. The congregation may be seeing the light with regard to the doctrines of grace but may have not yet seen the implications of those doctrinal distinctives in some areas. The congregation may still be labouring under the false notion that inviting men to Christ is incomplete unless an invitation is given for men to come to the front of the church building. What is one to do? Is the pastor to boldly declare that 'as from next Sunday there will be no more altar calls from this pulpit'? Before this matter can be intelligently resolved, we must make the following observations.

1. Learning and the intelligent comprehension of truth must precede the application of truth. In other words, there is no point in seeking to apply a specific truth unless the truth is first expounded and understood. And this takes time; for knowledge displaces ignorance but slowly. Thus we read of Paul and Barnabas 'that a *whole year* they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people' (Acts 11:26). Many Christians who now embrace the doctrines of grace once did not receive these truths, and their view with regard to evangelism shifted *only after* they came to a consistent understanding of these truths. Therefore, to expect men to accept a methodology inviting men to Christ which is thoroughly consistent with the doctrines of grace without their first having a parallel growth and development in their doctrinal understanding, is to court defeat from the beginning. The old saying expresses this point quite aptly: 'A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.'

2. Seeking to convince a man contrary to his understanding could also have the dangerous side-effect of raising unnecessary prejudices against the one who is teaching. As the Apostle Paul had to take care that he did not unnecessarily prejudice the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, so too must the pastor, who is wrestling, as it were, with a congregation that expects an invitation to the front of the building, be careful that he does not cast a

shadow of suspicion over his theological integrity and judgment. To do so would be to put his ability as a spiritual leader in question, and to jeopardise his whole ministry with that congregation.

3. There is nothing intrinsically evil about people walking to the front of a church building at the end of the service. It is only walking to the front with the wrong idea as to why they are walking that must be dealt with. What is important is what the preacher said in inviting them to the front, and what they understand coming to the front means. You will remember that while one of Paul's great burdens was to show that those who taught that circumcision was necessary in order to gain favour with God were in grave error, he nevertheless himself circumcised Timothy. As Matthew Henry once wrote, 'the ceremonial law was dead—but not deadly'. It is in the same way that we may regard 'walking the aisle'.

4. At this point we must deal with what would seem to be a plausible objection. Might not one object and point out that if the pastor has preached clearly enough to distinguish between the invitation ideas outlined in this paper as being legitimate and the other erroneous practices of equating coming forward with coming to Christ, then the people have already been enlightened and taught. So why persist in inviting men to the front? There is no longer any need to accommodate them in this.

It would seem that this objection gives us a clue to the answer. The preacher has cleared up the distinction between these legitimate invitation ideas and the other practices. The objection admits that this is all that has been distinguished. But this is not our main concern. The main concern is to have the congregation see the distinction between coming to the front and not coming to the front. And until this distinction is seen it is still legitimate and proper to invite men to come forward in congregations where such accommodation may be applicable. Making the distinction between one invitation practice and another invitation practice is most assuredly a step in the right direction, but there is still much to be accomplished.

5. When a person is converted there must be a time and way of expressing his desire to be baptised and his intention of joining the fellowship of a local assembly. Now this may be done in a variety of ways.[14] But there is no valid reason why it cannot be done in response to an invitation from the pastor to those who believe themselves to be recipients of redeeming grace to come forward and present themselves as candidates for baptism.

It would seem, to the writers, that this would be an occasion to exercise the principle of accommodation as taught in God's Word. Giving men an opportunity, by public invitation, to present themselves as candidates for baptism can in no sense be thought of as compromise because an invitation to the *converted* to come forward does not cut across any principles of biblical theology. In no way does it represent the outward response of going forward as being connected with 'receiving Christ' which is but to establish a way of salvation not appointed by him who alone has the prerogative to make such appointments. It is also a suitable occasion to practice the principle of accommodation because it takes into consideration human infirmity without being satisfied with human ignorance.

It is important, however, to remember the proper grounds for the exercise of biblical accommodation. We are to

accommodate people on the basis of their ignorance of truth, but *never* on the basis of their refusal to acknowledge that which they know to be true. This makes all the difference between accommodation and compromise. Keeping this consideration in mind will give us a principle to use in determining for just how long we are to accommodate a congregation in this matter. This is an important and relevant aspect of this issue, but because of the great number of variables, no specific answer can be given. We must wait on the Spirit for enlightenment and we must have adequate time to instruct and teach the people. But once ignorance is dispelled, then accommodation need no longer be practiced.

One further thought on the matter. Inviting men forward, as suggested above, in no way promotes the erroneous and dangerous notion that one's consciousness of faith is a sufficient basis for an abiding assurance that one is in a state of grace. One of the greatest dangers of the invitation system resides not only in the false equating of physical movement with coming to Christ, but in the prevailing practice of granting assurance of salvation on a non-biblical basis. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find any human evangelist granting assurance solely on the basis of one's consciousness of faith. Though the Spirit can and does communicate sensible impressions of divine favour to the soul even at the moment of justification, yet the Scriptures do speak of a spurious or non-saving faith. The Scriptures speak of 'believing in vain' (1 Cor. 15:2). Scripture speaks about those 'which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away' (Luke 8:13). For this reason those who profess to be savingly joined to the Lord Jesus are exhorted to 'give diligence to make your calling and election sure' (2 Pet. 1:10; also 2 Cor. 13:5). Any enduring sense of assurance of grace and salvation, therefore, that is maintained apart from a consistent Christian walk may very well be a dangerous deception. And yet, inviting men to the front of a church building for the purpose of giving them an opportunity to express a desire to be baptised in no way partakes of this error.

Of course, those who may decide to adopt the position set forth in this paper and to put it into practice ought to realise that inviting man to the front of a church building has invariably been wedded to a false theology. The question that such a person must answer to his satisfaction is this: 'Does this mean that inviting men forward, cannot, therefore, be used without harm?' When Paul circumcised Timothy the Apostle's act of accommodation had the same problem associated with it. The matter of circumcision had proved to be a very hot issue and led to the Jerusalem Council at which time the heresy of the Judaisers was hotly debated (Acts 15). Yet, Paul did not conclude that since circumcision was a hot issue, grossly misunderstood by many, that therefore he ought not to circumcise Timothy. His conclusion was the opposite. He concluded in favour of accommodation and circumcised Timothy on the very heels of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 16:3).

Whether or not the Apostle showed prudence in this we must leave to the judgment of faithful brethren in Christ. But before we judge him too harshly we must remember a difficulty that we all face when making a decision between difficult alternatives. Rarely, if ever, do people have the opportunity to make a difficult decision regarding the application of a

(*continued on page 20*)

God's attitude towards unbelievers

An exposition of Ezekiel 33:11 by Pastor Walter Chantry[1], *Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

HUMILITY OF MIND INCREASINGLY OUGHT TO CHARACTERISE GOD'S PEOPLE as they grow in grace. Our duty as Christians is to learn sound doctrine, but it is essential that our minds do not draw conclusions that are unwarranted by God's Word. It is very easy to make that mistake. You may learn one doctrine and draw conclusions from it that are contrary to other parts of Holy Scripture.

In the study of the Bible, we should always remember Isaiah 55:9, 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.' Before the mind of God, human reason can appear ludicrous. Logic often tries to capture God, but it is meant to be God's captive. Now, reason is very important for knowing God. It is possible for man to really know God. And to really know God, your reason must function properly. But in functioning, reason must be the tool of the Holy Spirit and the servant of his revelation, the Bible. Logic cannot be the producer or the master of truth. Rather, logic (or reason) must be the instrument for receiving and applying truth that God has spoken. Only in this way can we know and understand the Author of all Truth.

Some Christians have begun to understand predestination. They see in the Bible that the Eternal God has fixed all events before the world began; that he causes everything to come to pass—even events that are evil in our eyes; even the death of the Lord Jesus Christ was appointed by the Sovereign Lord. And the eternal destinies of all men were determined prior to the creation of the world. Seeing that salvation is all of grace, and that it is God who makes the difference between those who are finally saved and those who are forever lost, many Christians *draw the conclusion* that God does not desire all men to be saved. Such logic is contrary to the express statements of Scripture. This form of human reason makes sinners hesitate to receive the gospel invitations of Christ, and also causes some preachers to hesitate in urging all sinners to repent and believe.

I would like to disabuse your minds of such thoughts, and hope, by God's grace, that Ezekiel 33:11 will do just that. Notice the verse. The prophet was commanded, '*Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God,*

[1]This exposition by pastor Walter Chantry appeared first in the *Sword and Trowel*, U.S.A.

I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?' You will see in the text the following truths.

God desires the Salvation of All Sinful Men

All without exception. There is no other way to understand the text. We are here speaking of God's will as his desire, not as his decree. God has not foreordained that all men will be saved. All men will not be saved. There is eternal punishment for those who despise God and continue in their rebellion against him, and the Lord himself has purposed and promised to carry out that punishment. But the Lord does not delight in this destruction of his creatures.

You will notice at the start of our text how forceful God is in making this statement. He swears by himself, for he can swear by none greater. '*As I live, saith the Lord.*' I am swearing by myself that I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. I am swearing by myself that I do have pleasure in the wicked turning from his ways to live. It can easily and confidently be drawn from this passage that God does not want you to die, you who are reading these words. God does not desire that you perish, but he desires that you repent and come to life. This universally applies to sinners.

The prophet often repeats this statement. If you turn to Ezekiel 18, you will find precisely the same assertions in verses 23 and 32. Verse 23 reads, '*Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should return from his ways and live?*' If you could read the verse as a Jew would, you would note an emphatic negative, reading this way: 'I do not by *any means* desire the death of a wicked person'. Our text in Ezekiel 33 is spoken to impertinent sinners who are refusing to turn to God, and who are about to taste his wrath. God is speaking to sinners who are going to die in their sins, but he still asserts that he has no pleasure in their deaths. I desire you to turn to me and live, God is saying.

Now God is not playing with words. He is not baiting hopelessly lost men with sarcastic appeals. When the Lord says that he wants sinners to turn and live, he is expressing a sincere and earnest love for all sinners. He really desires that all men be converted.

Jesus expressed this desire quite clearly in Matthew 23:34-38. '*Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zecharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come*

upon this generation, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, **how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and ye would not**! *Behold your house is left unto you desolate.*' Notice that Jesus is speaking to a people who are finally going to perish, and he knows it. That these people are about to be consumed by the wrath of of God is the main intent of Christ's statement. He is pronouncing a curse upon them. Yet, in the midst of sentencing them, Jesus expresses his love of them and a desire that they would repent and believe. He reminded these very people, who would soon perish, that they had been repeatedly invited to come to him. He assured them that even at that moment he desired them to freely partake of his saving mercy. In verse 37, our Lord said, '*I would have gathered you, but you would not*'. The Saviour sincerely desired their conversion. He wanted to gather Jerusalem into his saving and protecting grace, but they spurned his sincere invitation and refused to turn.

You remember Christ's invitations to Jerusalem. Once he stood in the temple and cried, '*If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink*'. Some people have said that the invitation is extended only to those who have a sense of being thirsty, but I feel this is reading into the text a meaning not at all intended. Christ is inviting all men within his hearing. He is expressing a desire that all sinners be thirsty and come to him and drink of the water of life.

So many universal pleas are made to sinners. Some cannot be understood in any but universal terms. 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, *all the ends of the earth:* for I am God, and there is none else' (Isa. 45:22). 'God now commandeth *all men everywhere* to repent' (Acts 17:30). God clearly invites you to mercy and the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ. More than that, he commands you, '*Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways*'. And he lovingly and condescendingly pleads, '*Why will ye die?*' In other words, it is only your own obstinate will that prevents your receiving of Christ. There is no outside force holding you in your sin. It is your obstinacy alone that is the cause of your unbelief.

There is no reason from the standpoint of the gospel that you cannot be saved. For in it God freely offers you eternal life in Jesus Christ. He lovingly desires your repentance. But it is also clear from the text that if you will not repent, then you must die. God does not desire that you be saved apart from the means that he has appointed. God invites you to turn from sin. He has sent messengers to tell you that he sincerely desires you to come to Christ. Your blood is upon your own head, and your damnation will be more severe if you will not believe and live. Will you abuse the compassionate appeals of the Father and the Son who sincerely desire your salvation? If you do, your house will be eternally desolate, and justly so!

Problems that arise

Be assured that problems arise. God is not uncomfortable with his words. He does not contradict himself. For instance, you may wonder 'How can God be sincere in offering salvation to men whom he has appointed to wrath before they were born? What is the sense of an impassioned plea to men so enslaved to sin that they cannot respond, especially when he has not purposed to give them the grace to respond?' Other questions could be asked. But we will find these difficult enough for now.

Again I would remind you that these are human problems. We ask in perplexity, 'How can God desire that some men be saved when he has appointed those same men to final destruction?' Jesus Christ feels at home with these two concepts side by side. Matthew 11:25 records our Saviour praying, '*I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.*' He praised the Father for his sovereignty. He rejoiced that God finally determines who will be saved by hiding things necessary for salvation from some and revealing them to others; and all of this because it 'seemed good' to him. Yet immediately in verse 28 Jesus cries, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' In so saying, Christ expresses his sincere desire that his hearers acknowledge their burdens and come to him for rest. The invitation is given to all, even those whose eyes are blinded. And Christ is comfortable with these two things side by side.

As John Calvin has said, 'Although God's will is simple, yet there is great variety involved in it, as far as our senses are concerned. Besides, it is not surprising that our eyes should be blinded by intense light, so that we cannot certainly judge how God wishes all to be saved, and yet has devoted the reprobate to eternal destruction, and wishes them to perish.' A contradiction? No. It is something that does not fit together in our minds, but the light of God's wisdom can bring them into harmony. Here are some suggestions as to how the problems may be resolved in your minds:

There are Distinctions Within the Love of God

God loves saints in a way that he does not love sinners. He expresses a common love to all men in giving them all sunshine and rain (Matt. 5:43-48). No one can deny that this universal love of God is sincere. But the difference of God's special love for holy men will be displayed when saints are ushered into heaven and sinners are cast into hell. Though God loves sinners for a time, his goodness will come to an end. But his love for saints is unbounded by time. 'I have loved thee with an *everlasting* love' (Jer. 31:3).

Gospel invitations express a general love for all men. God freely invites all to repent and receive forgiveness of sins. 'Turn ye!' says our text. *All men everywhere* are included in the plea. But God's distinguishing love for his elect begins to appear when he effectually calls men into union with Christ. A special and differentiating love is exhibited by renewing the wills of some so that they do respond to the gospel offer. The special love for his elect does not cancel his general love for reprobate and elect alike, any more than your special love for your son makes your general love for boys less sincere.

In Luke 14 there is a parable which clearly illustrates the point (beginning at vs. 16). '*A certain man made a great supper and invited many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were invited, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse.*' Then the excuses are given. He continues, '*So the servant came and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servants, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast said, and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servants, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.*'

Notice that Gospel invitations are given to men who will not accept them. But more important just now, notice the two groups of men. One group was sincerely invited, but refused to attend the gospel feast. The other group was compelled to come. Was the offer to the first group insincere because they were not compelled to come or because the second group was? No! It is perfectly sincere. But the marvel of God's grace is that he will not take a 'no' for an answer from some men. If you had a banquet and invited fifteen people to come, but were insistent that five come, would it make your offer to the other ten insincere? Of course not. You really want them all to be there. But you *must* have the friends in attendance. Why should the lord compel the halt and blind to be there? Not because they were more dignified. Not because of anything in themselves. But that his house may be full. For the praise of the glory of his grace, God has compelled the worst sinners to repent and believe.

Another point that will help to reconcile these things in our minds may be drawn from the same parable. You say, 'It appears that God's love to reprobate sinners is frustrated. How could God be eternally frustrated?' The lord's love for the first group invited to the feast was not frustrated. It was expended. You have seen this in the lives of men. You have known men who sincerely love their wives. But after a time of repeated unfaithfulness from his spouse, a man will find his sincere love quenched. It is quenched not because it is insincere love, but because it is abused love. So God's love for sinners is terminated when they persist in their

wicked ways. The Bible nowhere suggests that God loves men in hell. He does not. Hell is a place where the last vestige of God's favour is removed. God's expression of love to his creatures need not be eternal to be sincere.

There is Complexity In the Character and Mind of God

There is simplicity. But especially to the ignorant human mind, there is complexity to God's way. Hence Jesus may weep in love for Jerusalem even while he solemnly states his intention to destroy her. Some men would say, 'Either Jesus was incapable of saving Jerusalem, or else he was insincere in saying that he wished to do so.' But neither is true. Neither is the necessary conclusion of logic. It is perfectly possible for someone to have deep pity while sentencing in judgment.

I like the example that Robert Dabney gave on this subject in an essay. He tells of George Washington sentencing Major Andre to death. You will recall that Major Andre was the officer in the British army who had served as the British agent to receive traitorous information from Benedict Arnold. Major Andre was captured with information about American forts. George Washington had a genuine admiration, love and compassion for Andre and did not want to sign his death warrant. Yet he did sign it. Why? Because of the complexity of the general's motives. Not because he lacked the power to excuse Andre. He had that authority. Nor because he failed to love Andre. He did love him. Not because he failed to love Andre. He did love him. But because the good of his country and the good to all men were involved, he made the decision that Andre must die.

Some no doubt said, 'Washington is a hypocrite to say he loves Andre and then condemn him'. Others no doubt said, 'His hands must have been tied. He really loved the man, so he must have lacked the authority to release him.' Neither is true. Washington could have forgiven Andre and wished to do so. Yet he felt at ease in sending him to the gallows, because of higher considerations. That is just an earthly illustration to warn you away from oversimplified logic when you come to heavenly truths. Remember that God's ways are higher than your ways and his thoughts than your thoughts. We can see reasons or avenues along which the mind of God might travel in loving and condemning at the same time, but unless the Word of God gives us the answers, we dare not make our mind the source of truth by coming to firm conclusions.

If you are insistent that God cannot lovingly invite sinners while he has justly assigned them to an eternity of suffering, then answer another question. How could God be really angry with his elect at the same time that he fully purposed to redeem them? Ephesians 2:3 says that Christians were in the past 'children of wrath *even as others*' who finally perish.

How could God be angry against you just as he is angry against the reprobate when he loved you with an eternal, electing love? These are by no means simple questions. Do not try to reduce the mysteries of God's mind to the simplicities of your mind. God is angry with the elect who have not yet believed on his name. And God still loves the reprobate who has not yet been cast into hell.

It is your Responsibility to take a Sincere Gospel Invitation to all sinners

Even if your mind is still confused as to how God's desiring will, expressed in the Gospel, can be reconciled with God's decreeing will, accomplished in history, it is still your responsibility to invite all. Our text in Ezekiel 33 commands the Lord's servants to 'Say unto them . . . Turn ye, turn ye'. You are commissioned to tell men of God's displeasure at wicked men dying in their sins. You are to tell them that it would please him if sinners turn from sin and live. You are to beseech men, 'Why will ye die'. You are to invite men to turn. You are to command all sinners to turn and live. You are to do so on God's authority.

Though you may have talked in the presence of sinners about election, you must assure them that Gospel-invitations are to them. You are to reason from the sincere desire of God that they repent. You are to assure men that the universal offer of mercy to all who repent and believe gives them a right to go to Christ for mercy. You have the very Word of God to assure them that if they will believe and repent, as God desires them to do, God will certainly give them life. Implied in the words of our text is the assurance that if you will turn, you will live and not die.

Some poor sinners who have been made aware that they have criminally offended God hesitate to turn to Christ. They hesitate because they are not sure they are welcome. They have heard about election and feel that unless they can be sure that God has chosen them to life from eternity, that the offers of salvation do not apply to them. Before they may be sure the invitation is for them to attend the gospel feast, they feel they must know whether God has eternally intended to compel them to come. You are to assure poor sinners that God does not delight in the death of any and that he wishes the repentance of all sinners. And further, he commands all rebels to lay down their arms with a purpose to obey his law. It is not necessary to question whether you are an elect sinner. If you are a sinner, the invitation and the ultimatum are issued to you.

Other poor sinners have begun to feel the weight of their sins and have wanted to flee for their lives to Christ, but they have been held back by another error. They have heard that Jesus only invites hungry and thirsty sinners to Himself. They have been told that only awakened sinners are addressed in Gospel invitations. Then the sinner begins to say to himself, 'I'm not really sure that I am convicted of my sins as I ought to be. I don't know if the Spirit has done a deep enough work of bringing sorrow

for sin. Maybe I don't really thirst for Christ. Maybe I'm not truly hungry. I haven't mourned as others have. I've read their testimonies. Maybe the offer of mercy isn't for me.'

The Bible does teach that no man ever will respond to the gospel without a prior work of God upon his soul. 'No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him.' God does awaken sinners to bring them to himself. However, Gospel invitations do not ask a man to discern this work of God in his heart before he may feel that the invitation is to himself. The invitation in our text does not ask about the sinner's desire to turn from sin. Rather it expresses God's desire that the sinner turn and live. In this text is sufficient warrant for any sinner to receive life in Jesus Christ.

Now a man who is altogether ignorant that he is a sinner, will not think that the passage refers to him. A proud man who refuses to admit that he has sinned will imagine that this verse has nothing to say to him. The language of invitations must be suited to the condition of sinners. But the invitations of the Bible never require a certain degree of feeling before you are welcome to go to Christ. They never suggest that a certain course of study on sin is needed before you will know enough to be welcome as a penitent. All sinners, simply as sinners, are invited to repent and believe. There is no extra step required. You need not be convinced *that you are convicted* that you are a sinner.

God wants you to acknowledge that you are a sinner. The best way to do that is to turn from your sin and live. You have a right to come to Jesus Christ today, because you are a sinner and sinners are ordered to believe and repent. It is your right, not because you deserve it in yourself, but because God's Word grants you the right. Go to Christ for mercy. If any ask how you hope to receive pardon for sin, you a rebel and a scoundrel, answer, 'I have no rights from my character or works, but I have here a passport to God's throne of mercy. It contains an oath from himself that if I do go to Christ and turn from sin, he will give me life. I would not have dared to believe that it was possible, except that he has said so himself. He says right here in Ezekiel 33:11 that he does not want me to die. See, it has my name right here . . . "wicked". He says he wants me to turn and live. He even begs me to turn. I can't understand why, but God has said it.'

If any ask if you have been sufficiently awakened, tell him that you do not read that requirement here. He says 'wicked', not awakened wicked, or elect wicked. Don't let anyone put an extra step in your way. God has made it clear that the wicked are welcome. That perfectly suits my case.

Sinner, do you see that Jesus holds out the water of life to you? If you do not drink of these living waters, the day will come that you will be

(*continued on page 6*)

Christ uncreated

A consideration of the phrase 'the first-born of every creature' (Col. 1:15), by Fred Arnot

This contribution by the pastor of the Baptist church in Uitenhage, South Africa, is brief but illustrates well the careful attention to detail required if we are to do justice to the truth. Pastor Arnot demonstrates that the moving of one accent in a single Greek word can play into the hands of errorists such as the Jehovah's Witnesses. Our task as Christians is not only to be equipped to contend for the faith but to propagate the glory of it. The glory of Christ's person comes through wonderfully in the concluding three paragraphs.

The christological statement of Colossians 1:15 'the first-born of every creature' has been a problem passage to orthodox Christians for many centuries. The proponents of Arianism maintained that the Son of God was not eternal but created by the Father from nothing as an instrument for the creation of the world. He was considered by them to be a creature and not God by nature.

The problem is that on a superficial reading of the text, Colossians 1:15 appears to be saying that Christ was the first created thing. If this were the case it would support the denial of the eternal sonship of the second person of the Trinity. It would affirm that he was created and not begotten. Whenever a Jehovah's Witness engages in an argument concerning the eternal sonship of Christ, he will normally clinch his argument with Colossians 1:15 and the average evangelical is left floundering.

That this passage was a problem to the orthodox in ancient times can be seen from its textual history. Isidorus Pelus (d.circa 450) a champion of christological orthodoxy and an opponent of Nestorianism (followed by Erasmus), amended the text by the simple expedient of moving the accent of prototokos (first-born) from the third last to the second last syllable, thus making it to mean 'first-bearer' instead of 'first-born'. The trinitarians of the Catholic Church argued against the Arians that if the intention of Paul was to teach that Christ was the first created being, he would have used the more obvious word protoktistos which means 'first-created'. Justin Martyr rendered it ambiguously as: 'first-born of God and before all creation' (Dial.100).

There are two very good reasons for regarding Colossians 1:15 as a verse which enriches our understanding of Christ as Lord and as the eternal Son of God. The first argument is taken from the meaning of the word 'first-born' and the second is taken from the doctrine of the two natures of Christ.

In the Old Testament the 'first-born' was not necessarily the first or the eldest child. The privilege of being 'first-born' could be conferred by the father on any of his male children. So Ephraim was given precedence over Manasseh (Gen. 48:17,20) and Jacob could steal the rights of the 'first-born' from Esau (Gen. 25:29ff.). David had precedence over his brothers (1 Sam. 16:13) and Solomon, though one of David's younger sons, was declared king by his father (1 Kings 1:32ff.). According to the Nuzu tablets of Northern Babylonia this was a common practice throughout the Middle East in patriarchal times. The main point of the word 'first-born' was not precedence in time, but precedence in authority. He was both in a legal and in a religious sense the head of the family, and had to rule, protect and support the people for whom he was responsible. Thus the term means also 'ruler'. The 'first-born of every creature' means that Jesus has sovereignty over the whole of creation.

Then we must also interpret this passage in the light of the doctrine of the two natures of Christ. The person of Christ

is a mysterious conjoining of the human and the divine; in the words of the Council of Chalcedon 'at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man . . . recognised in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation . . . to form one person . . . the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Understanding this doctrine we have no difficulty with Colossians 1:15, for Christ in his *humanity* was the most important created thing. The 'first-born of every creature' does not mean that the earthly Jesus was the first created being, but that Jesus of Nazareth was the crown of all creation. Richard Sibbes in *A Description of Christ* writes: 'And as a man he (God) loves him, for as man he was the most excellent creature in the world, he was conceived, fashioned, and framed in his mother's womb by the Holy Ghost. It is said, Hebrews 10:5, God gave him a body. God the Father by the Holy Ghost fashioned and framed and fitted him with a body, therefore God must needs love his own workmanship. . . . As man he was well-pleasing to God. He took the manhood and engrafted it into the second person, and enriched it there. . . .' Thus Christ in his humanity was uniquely superior to the rest of creation. In verse 18 Paul indicates that this is the meaning of verse 15 by declaring: 'that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.'

If Colossians 1:15 refers to the humanity of Christ, we must also understand that the two natures cannot be divided. In his humanity he is the most important created thing, and in his divinity he is the universal sovereign Lord. Thus 'the first-born of every creature' means that in his humanity he had the pre-eminence, and in his divinity, as the 'image of the invisible God' he is Lord of all.

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Biblical principle which will result in putting all the positive factors on one side of the equation and all the negative factors on the other. Difficult decisions of application involve a process of choosing among several alternatives, each one of which may have attractive features as well as unattractive ones (attractive in the sense of seeming to accord with the revealed will of God, tending to his glory and promoting the well-being of the souls who have been entrusted to the pastor's care). Most frequently these difficult decisions are not choices between a simple right and wrong answer. In our fallen world making a choice between two alternatives regarding the application of bible truth involves choosing one set of problems over another set of problems. To say categorically that because inviting men forward is so wedded to a false theology that its use will only harm souls ignores this.

Robert L. Dabney, perhaps one of the greatest of American theologians, once wrote: 'All possible human actions must fall in one of these three classes: 1. actions which Scripture positively enjoins; 2. actions which Scripture positively forbids; 3. actions which Scripture leaves indifferent.'[15] Does the giving of an invitation to come forward as an act of accommodation as outlined above come under the category of 1, 2, or 3? If it can be put in the last category, then it is lawful.

[10] Albert B. Dod, 'The Origin of the Call for Decisions', in *The Banner of Truth*, Issue 32, December 1963, pp. 14, 15.

[11] Iain Murray, *The Invitation System* (The Banner of Truth Trust, n.d.), p. 26.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[13] One possible way, for example, is illustrated by the following quote taken from the bulletin of an Orthodox Presbyterian Church on Long Island, New York, Sunday, 9th April, 1972: 'The Session will meet Tuesday at 8 p.m. in the lower auditorium. Those who desire to confess saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to assume the duties of communicant church membership, are cordially invited.'

[14] 'Anti-Biblical Theories of Rights,' in *Discussions: Evangelical and Theological*, vol. 3, p. 522.

This account of Haldane's life was written by Rev. Ian R. Tallach, minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, Perth. In a paper given by Robert Dunlop on Alexander Carson at a recent Carey Conference we saw that Robert Haldane was given a great deal of scholarly help by Carson in the production of his commentary on Romans. The Haldane brothers embraced Baptist principles quite soon after conversion. They were supporters of William Carey and the Serampore work in India.

We thank the Blythswood Tract Society for permission to reprint this biographical account.

Robert Haldane (1764-1842)

DURING THE 18TH CENTURY, THE RELIGIOUS SCENE IN SCOTLAND WAS largely one of spiritual desolation. The country was suffering under the blight of Moderatism, and it desperately needed a new evangelical movement. God, in whose sovereign hands lies the reformation of his Church, was to raise up, from an unexpected quarter, those who would bring about a change. Paul informs the Corinthians that not many noble, not many mighty are called. His words indicate that sometimes God may and does call the noble. This is what he did when he called Robert and James Haldane into his kingdom, and sent them out to preach his word. They were descended from an ancient Scottish family which had for many years been possessors of the Barony of Gleneagles, a valley in the Ochil Hills of Perthshire.

The particular subject of this biographical sketch is the elder of the two brothers—Robert. He was born in London in 1764. His father, Captain James Haldane, owned the estates of Gleneagles and Trinity Gask in Perthshire, and of Airthrey, the site of today's Stirling University. Of his marriage to Katherine Duncan, there were three children—Robert, Helen and James. Before the birth of the last child, Captain Haldane had died, leaving his wife a widow with the care of children, the eldest of whom was four. Shortly before his death, the father was asked about his hopes for eternity. His reply was: 'I have full confidence in Jesus.'

From their infancy, the children's minds were instilled by their mother with 'a sense of the importance of eternity'. She particularly impressed upon them the necessity of prayer, and was careful to teach them to memorise and understand the psalms, portions of the *Shorter Catechism* and of Scripture. In a memorandum found among his papers, James wrote: 'Her instructions were so far useful that even when she was not present, I made a conscience of prayer. What she said concerning sin and punishment also produced a considerable impression on my mind.' He proceeds: 'My mother died when I was very young. I believe, under six, yet I am convinced that the early impression made on my mind by

her care was never entirely effaced; and to this, as an eminent means in the hand of God, I impute my serious thoughts which, in the midst of my folly, would sometimes obtrude upon my mind, as well as that still small voice of conscience, which afterwards led me to see all below was vanity without an interest in that inheritance which can never fade away.' What follows should be of interest to parents. He adds: 'I mention this more particularly, because it may lead Christian parents to sow in hope the seed of Divine truth in the minds of their children, and may prevent their considering their efforts unavailing even when things which they have taught them seem to have been uttered in vain. No means of grace is, I apprehend, more, perhaps none so much, countenanced by God as early religious instruction.'

The devout mother died in 1774. Before her death, she had been enabled 'implicitly to surrender' her children into the hands of God and her earnest prayer was that their lives would be devoted to the Lord's service upon earth, and that finally they would be brought to his everlasting kingdom. Her prayers did not go unheard, as subsequent events show.

After their mother's death, the children were placed under the care of their grandmother, Lady Lundie, who resided at Dundee. Their education was well attended to, first under a private tutor, and later at the Grammar School. Upon the death of their grandmother, the boys were moved to Edinburgh where they attended the High School. After a time at the College of Edinburgh, Robert's studies were abruptly abandoned, and he joined the Navy. The year was 1780, and he was sixteen. He was in service during the American War and the war with France. He took part in the relief of Gibraltar during its siege. In 1783 peace was concluded, and Robert gave up his career in the Navy, and returned to Scotland. In 1785, he married and settled on his estate at Airthrey, and for some years he 'acquired the character of an enterprising and popular landlord'.

The 'spell' by which Robert Haldane's mind was bound to the world and the 'passing things of time' was now to be broken. Strangely, as he has left on record, he was 'roused from the sleep of spiritual death by the excitement of the French Revolution'. Until this event, he had never particularly turned his attention to political discussion. His involvement at a local level occasioned his meeting respectable clergymen, who 'constantly attempted to lead his mind to infinitely higher concerns' than those he had so far pursued. Gradually, his 'political speculations paved the way for religious considerations'. Together with the advice of pious ministers, various instruments were used towards his conversion. Among them were good books which were 'greatly blessed' to his soul, as they were read with humility and prayer. He was especially indebted to a mason who was able, by his 'plain and scriptural' statements of truth, to show him that the gospel was glad tidings, and that, in the matter of

justification, 'faith must cast away all reliance on the shifting sands of frames or feelings, and fasten only upon the Rock of Ages'. Robert's conversion was almost simultaneous with that of his brother James.

Dr. Steel informs us that the change in the Haldanes was 'thorough, marked and practical. The same energy, activity and zeal that had possessed them before, was turned by the grace of God into channels of usefulness. They had no sooner found the blessing of salvation than they sought to diffuse the knowledge of the Saviour to others'. The mind of Robert Haldane was particularly directed to missions. 'The work of evangelising the benighted seemed to him of such magnitude that compared with it the affairs of time appeared to sink into nothing, and no sacrifice seemed too great in order to its attainment.' When the London Missionary Society was formed, both the brothers became subscribers.

The first project that engrossed Haldane's attention was the establishment of a mission in India, which was to be financed by his own means. His wish was to spend the remainder of his life communicating the precious truths of the gospel to the Hindus who were then under British rule. To render his mission as effective as possible, he sought to enlist others, in whose devotion to the service of God he had confidence. 'No expense was to be spared in furnishing all that was needed to make the mission useful, whether as the means of publishing translations of the Scriptures and tracts, educating native teachers or instructing native children.' Haldane proposed to sacrifice talents, property, and himself—unreservedly. He intended to sell his 'beautiful estate of Airthrey' to finance the enterprise.

Sadly, his magnificent plans were to be frustrated. After securing the consent of valuable helpers in the Rev. Dr. Bogue of Gosport, Dr. Innes of Stirling and others, application was made to the Indian Government. But the door was shut, mainly because of the prejudices of the East India Company. 'The preaching of the Gospel was pronounced dangerous to the Government of India, and Haldane stigmatised as a suspect revolutionist.' Dr. Steel exclaims: 'Too late, alas! do the rulers of this world see the best means of promoting their high object. Had India been opened to the gospel as early as this country had it in possession, and had the Church fully availed herself of the opportunity, how much . . . of that unhappy country might have been won for Christ. . . . It is an indelible disgrace that such men as Dr. Carey, Dr. Judson and Mr. Haldane were forbidden by a professedly Christian government from preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in India.

If, however, God closed one door on Haldane, he opened another to him. The period of which we write has been called the 'midnight of the Church of Scotland'. The pulpits of our land were disgraced (apart from a few exceptions) by the Moderates. Dr. Hamilton writes that 'to deliver a

gospel sermon or preach to the hearts and consciences of dying sinners, was as completely beyond their power as to speak the language of angels'. The chill of spiritual death that characterised the pulpit was reflected in the prevailing godlessness of the people. In 1796, when a proposal was made at the General Assembly for the propagation of the gospel in heathen lands, it was resolutely opposed by the leading party. One of the taunts of the Moderates was: 'Why send missionaries abroad, when there is so much ignorance at home?'

The spiritual desolation at home began to press heavily upon the heart of James Haldane. The taunt of the Moderates—'Why not look at home?' went like an arrow to his soul, and he resolved, in company with others of like mind, to begin the evangelisation of his homeland. They took their commission from the general obligation imposed on every believer to witness to Christ. At first, tracts were widely distributed and Sabbath-schools established. Soon 'a desire to preach the Gospel animated the soul of James Haldane'. Encouraged by a first effort, he determined to go out on evangelistic tours which led him to preach in almost every town and populous village in Scotland. Crowds flocked to hear him and his companions. The first tour was made in 1797, and, from that time, James Haldane became an evangelist in Scotland. So far, he and his helpers had regarded themselves as members of the Established Church, but due to the antagonism encountered from the General Assembly which had condemned their activities, they made up their minds to sever their connections with the Church. Despite the opposition, however, their work prospered, and they were made a blessing to thousands.

With the frustration of his missionary plans for India, Robert Haldane turned his energies to the scene at home. Together with his brother, he formed a society, consisting of Christians of different denominations, under the title of 'The Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home'. The principles and aims of the Society were recommended through the pages of *The Missionary Magazine*. By word and pen, the Society proclaimed the 'unfettered preaching of the gospel'. Its sole intention was to make known the truth of God. The Society employed itinerant preachers, school-masters and others. Although it was frowned on by the Establishment, the 'itinerating system' became very popular. During the winter and spring of 1797-1798, there was 'a great awakening, a general spirit of enquiry'. The Moderates were 'filled with fear and indignation. Most gladly would they have retracted the exhortation to begin at home'! In the course of one year, 20,000 tracts were printed and distributed.

In order to promote the work of evangelisation, Robert Haldane sold his estate at Airthrey. Later he was to write of its sale: 'In that transaction I sincerely rejoice to this hour. . . . I gave up a place and a situation which continually presented objects calculated to excite and gratify 'the

lust of the eye and the pride of life' . . . I can truly say I experience the accomplishment of the gracious promise, that leaving home and lands, although in a very restricted sense, as I trust for the gospel's sake alone, and what I esteem my duty, I have received manifold more, though, as it is added 'with persecutions'! The proceeds of the sale of the estate were poured into the missionary cause at home. Places of worship were provided in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and elsewhere; a seminary was established for the training of home missionaries; an unlimited supply of tracts was furnished 'for all who had the will and the opportunity to avail themselves' of Haldane's liberality. He also provided for the wide circulation of Bibles, the training of home-missionaries, catechists and Scripture readers. 'All this was done,' we are informed, 'under his own superintendence and at his own expense.' In twelve years, from 1798 to 1810, he spent more than £70,000 on home-missionary operations in Scotland.

Until 1810, Haldane's sphere of labour was mainly administrative. But the last thirty years of his life were devoted to occupations of a more spiritual nature, and were honoured with spiritual blessing which must place his name 'high amongst the chief worthies of the Church of Christ'. Like his brother James, he began to use his tongue and pen in publishing the gospel of Christ.

In 1816, Haldane turned his attention to the Continent—to Geneva, where a great spiritual work was to begin. The city of Calvin—known as the cradle of the Reformation—at the time of Haldane's visit had become Socinian. The ministers of the Protestant Church 'did not know what they believed, or what they did not believe'. They were the laughing-stock of infidels. Upon his arrival at Geneva, Haldane made the acquaintance of some of the students of theology, and began to expound to them *The Epistle to the Romans.* His lectures were attended by eighteen students. Sixteen of them were awakened, as also was one of the city clergy—Ceasar Malan. The names of those who were converted under Haldane indicate the importance of his work at Geneva. Among them were Merle D'Aubigne, Gaussen, the author of *Theopneustia* (on the inspiration of Scripture), F. Monod, C. Rieu, H. Pyt, and others who became eminent ministers of Christ. As a result of Haldane's labours among the students 'The Evangelical Society of Geneva' was formed to spread the gospel. In the words of Merle D'Aubigne: 'If Geneva gave something to Scotland at the time of the Reformation—if she communicated light to John Knox, Geneva has received something from Scotland in return, in the blessed exertions of Robert Haldane.' Haldane returned to Scotland in 1819.

After his return, he resumed his labours for the promotion of the gospel at home. He made arrangements for the instruction of ten students with a view to their itinerating as home missionaries in the Highlands of

Scotland. He formed a branch of the Continental Society in Edinburgh for the spread of the gospel in France and Switzerland. Geurs writes of this Society: 'Wherever its missionaries went they found nothing but spiritual death, and in the hands of the Lord they became for multitudes the instruments of life and salvation.'

In 1825, Haldane took the lead in opposing the inclusion of the Apocrypha in the canon of Scripture. He was soon joined by others, such as Dr. Andrew Thomson. These men opposed those who questioned the authority of the Bible, and sought to contaminate it with uninspired writings. Beginning with his first *Review of the British and Foreign Bible Society in relation to the Apocrypha* etc., published in 1825, the controversy was to extend over twelve years. During that time, Haldane published a great deal, much valued for its defence of the plenary inspiration of the Bible. After the publication of the second edition of his *Evidences of the Authority of Divine Revelation*, he bent all his energies to the preparation and publication of his great work—*The Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans* (published by Banner of Truth 1958). The sixth edition of the exposition was published in 1842, shortly before his death. Dr. Chalmers described the work as 'a well-built commentary' and strongly recommended it to his students of theology. It was, he said, 'solid and congenial food'.

Towards the close of his life, Haldane spent more of his time at his small estate at Auchingray in Lanarkshire. Here he was in the habit of preaching to the local people who flocked to hear him. Although in failing health, he was unwilling to desist. In December, 1841, however, he left Auchingray for Edinburgh, for the last time. As his end drew near, he told his brother that 'however praiseworthy in the eyes of the world anything he had done might appear, he in no way rested on it as a ground of acceptance in the sight of God; that on the contrary, he renounced his good works as much as his bad ones, and desired only to be wrapt in the robe of his Redeemer's righteousness'. He added 'that he reposed securely on the atonement of his Saviour and that the words which he uttered on the cross—"It is finished"—gave him solid peace and comfort'. The last words he was heard to utter were: 'For ever with the Lord'—'for ever'—'for ever'. On 12th December, 1842, he fell asleep in Jesus. His remains were laid to rest in Glasgow Cathedral. James was to follow him in 1851.

Cover picture: *The Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia has been one of the most ruthless expressions of Communism yet to assert itself. The official policy of Kampuchea, as it is now called, is the destruction of all links with the past and with the world outside its borders except China. Phnom Penh was evacuated as well as other large towns and the people sent to work in the fields. The women shown in the picture are peasants threshing rice at an agricultural co-operative near Phnom Penh. The suffering involved in these upheavals not only in Cambodia. but also in Laos, is referred to in the editorial and the article by Paul Kauffman.*

About 25 books are recommended, several publishers commented upon, a holiday suggested for one of our friends, advice given to British readers as to how to obtain lesser known titles at present in print, and finally one tape-recorded exposition extolled.

Columns of Comment for Booklovers

The pastor-preacher whose main work it is to feed the flock has a mind which is preoccupied with exposition. His is an unceasing meditation in the Word. Little wonder then that such who excel in this role develop a strong determination to find expository material which helps open the Scriptures. Most valued are commentaries and books which grapple with and analyse important theological issues. History and biography are never to be excluded as these illustrate the practical outworkings of truth which otherwise would be theoretical. Most of the books to which I shall now refer (see full list at end) are suitable for laymen as well as for specialists.

When it comes to volumes of substance and enduring value The Banner of Truth continues to publish expository books, which according to a letter from Mrs. White of Cork, Ireland, had to be searched for in second hand bookshops just a few years ago. *James* by Robert Johnstone[1] has just been added to the Geneva series of commentaries. After studying the actual text the moderately good volume by Johnstone (a nineteenth century minister) helps one get hold of the flow of meaning and content. For ideas and liveliness the less orderly John Blanchard on James published by Walter (now out of print) is better. After that there is none to match the Puritan Thomas Manton for detail. Unhappily, this volume is now out of print. This reminds us that we should lay hold of Puritan treasures early. Volume 5 of Richard Sibbes[2] has recently appeared containing some of Sibbes' best expositions which flow with fulness and practicality.

The arrival by rebirth into our century from the archives of James Beverlin Ramsay (1814-1871) on Revelation chapters 1-11[3] is an event to be celebrated. His exposition is spiritual and practical rather than speculative and polemical. A test of a man's ability to explain the Apocalypse is to read him on the eleventh chapter, one of the most difficult passages in the Bible. Ramsay exceeds Hendriksen for detail and usefulness and is on a par with Hengstenberg.

The second volume of the Collected Writings of John Murray (2: Systematic Theology)[5] is now ready. Affection and esteem for the professor are reflected in the magnificence of the production. These volumes are fit to present at Buckingham Palace. The second is more useful than the first (The Claims of Truth)[4] which covers a wide range of subjects, some of which are of a transient nature. The volume on systematic theology deals with the 'cardio-vascular system' (the great centralities) of theology. The doctrine of man and the fall, common grace, the atonement, regeneration and sanctification are all treated with consummate skill. The ecclesiological section and the section on Matt. 24 and 25 (p. 321 to 417) is not in the same class.

The Christian Soldier by Dr. D. M. Lloyd-Jones consists of 26 sermons on Ephesians 6:10-20.[6] This is a companion volume to *The Christian Warfare* (Eph. 6:10-13).[7] Together with William Gurnall's *The Christian in Complete Armour*,[8] the expositor will be well supplied. If you haven't a copy of Gurnall get one while you can. You will never regret it! The Doctor's sermons are especially helpful in providing samples of how to preach in a balanced and relevant way. While on the subject of the Adversary readers will find *Satan Cast Out* by Frederick Leahy[9] of a high standard. Not quite in the same order from an expository point of view but nevertheless a very useful volume is *Demons in the World Today* by Merrill F. Unger.[10] The author provides

a balanced and informative survey of the many ways in which Satan works today.

The expositor on the subject of *Marriage, Home and Work* will definitely want the Doctor's expositions on Ephesians 5:18-6:9 called *Life in the Spirit.*[11] W. G. de Vries' *Marriage in Honour*[12] courageously tackles every aspect of marriage in detail including preparation for marriage. A chapter titled Life without Marriage is included. Despite much detail the author still does not really answer the ultimate questions on family planning. The translation is sometimes below standard. For instance on page 30 there is an incomprehensible sentence. Helpful service would be rendered if Wayne Mack's volume *How to develop deep unity in the marriage relationship*[13] was stocked by all bookshops. For detailed practical application it is unrivalled. The volume is presented in the form of a study manual which should not deter the reader. Two companion volumes, equal on their emphasis on practice are, *How to read the Bible* and *How to pray effectively.*[13] In the last mentioned there is a short but penetrating study on Ephesians 1:15-19. The practicality of this work is that Wayne Mack deals with such questions as, How to set up a prayer list, and, How to pray for missionaries, and, How to pray for all saints. There is nothing shallow or mechanical in the author's approach. These manuals are highly commended.

The Evangelical Press is expanding steadily both in foreign translation work and in the distribution of English books. An important accomplishment is the addition to the list of biographies by contemporary authors of John Thornbury's *God Sent Revival.*[14] Like Brian Edwards' biography of William Tyndale, *God's Outlaw,*[15] this volume deals with a watershed in evangelical history. John Thornbury tells of Nettleton, a man well experienced in revival, who stood in the breach when C. G. Finney was introducing a new theology and consequently new methods which have had adverse effects ever since. As well as providing a fascinating account of one of the most eminent of revival preachers the author has succeeded in bringing the major theological issues into focus. Excellent definitive statements are incorporated such as that found on page 204.

Evangelical Press have put the British market in their debt by importing many titles from America including William Hendriksen's *Survey of the Bible.*[16] What a worker is William Hendriksen! We are told that he stands at a long desk while writing his commentaries. Perhaps the power lies as much in the legs as in the brain as by this means the blood has flowed briskly to keep his mind clear and his pen brisk.

Evangelical Press, Blossomgate, Ripon, N. Yorkshire, HG4 2AJ, provide upon request an up to date list of over 200 titles. Be sure to encourage your local Christian bookshop to stock E. P. titles. Very important classics are available ranging from *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*[17] in 3 volumes to the recently new enlarged edition of the *Westminster Confession of Faith.*[18] Evangelical Press have just republished a number of the most useful of the shorter works by A. W. Pink in attractive covers at 25 pence each: *Divine Healing, Repentance* and *Eternal Punishment.*[19]

Donald MacLeod, the editor of *The Monthly Record of the Free Church of Scotland,* has recommended Hugh Martin's *The Atonement.*[20] Next time I see him I intend to express appreciation for this recommendation as it is thoroughly helpful, and in places inspired. The passage on page 83 describing Christ's priestly action in his death is worth the price of the whole book!

From Knox Press comes a volume of expositions on *Jeremiah,* 276 pages, clothbound, it is rich from first to last and that for only £1.25![21] The author, Alexander Stewart, who lived earlier this century, brings the times of Jeremiah to life. These expositions should be read first to kindle feeling, insight and understanding of the life and times of Jeremiah. After that the commentaries will be all the more appreciated for the detailed information they supply. Thank you Knox Press for this jewel!

Walt Hibbard, the enterprising director of 'Puritan-Reformed' (the discount book service of 1319 Newport Gap Pike, Plaza 41, Wilmington, Del 19804, U.S.A.), drew my attention in his most informative lists to the Puritan volumes being produced by James and Klock. I did not write for a sample because of the steep dollar prices. Suddenly a volume came by way of a gift from Bruce Bootes in Sydney, Australia, who aided by his wife is a prolific distributor of expository materials. The title was *Pastoral Epistles* by Patrick Fairbairn,[22] which I

have always wanted. The binding and presentation tells a message, namely, that James and Klock are out for quality. I hope I will be forgiven for making a personal suggestion in these columns and that is that with the reduced trans-Atlantic air fares, it would pay dividends of ultimate benefit for all if James and Klock invite Peter Lewis (and his wife if possible) for a week's holiday and conference about the relative merits of Puritan volumes. Already such excellent titles are listed by James and Klock as William Greenhill's *Ezekiel* (a massive work) and a later author, W. H. Green, on *Job*. But some choices while evangelical are of questionable value.

Paternoster's turn out a wide variety of evangelical material best judged for their merit by perusal in the shops where they feature prominently. F. F. Bruce's *Paul —Apostle of the Free Spirit*[23] is a scholarly work of the most meticulous kind, tracing the life of Paul and providing a large amount of background data relevant to Paul's life from his early days at Tarsus to his last days at Rome. The book with its endcovers showing Paul's journeys plus many illustrations is an asset to any library. The extent to which the author has referred to other researchers can be detected in many ways. A glance at the index shows successively names like Schnackenburg, Schneckenburger and Schneemelcher!

From Lion Publishers, *The History of Christianity*,[24] which covers a broad canvas from Josephus to Soweto. Adjectives in favour of this production: beautiful, superbly colourful, fascinating, all inclusive in sweep, factually accurate, enjoyable—against: naive, non-definitive, misleading. In the opening essay Constantine is hailed as a great victor and from then on everything is regarded as 'Christian' even Dostoevsky. This ecumenical, comprehensive approach assumes that readers are able to discern the true from the false. The real life of Christian history is summed up by Revelation 7:14. If this is borne in mind then those who have not studied church history before will learn much from these pages and should not be deterred by the price.

A slip of a book compared to some of those referred to so far is an account of the life of John Calvin, *Man of Geneva*, by E. W. Johnstone,[25] in a racy style suitable for young people (and older ones who enjoy relaxed reading). It costs £1.00! Inflation spares no one, not even the Banner! The author does not shirk the issue of the death of Servetus, nor does he hide Calvin's faults. He is gentle with the Anabaptists! If anyone thinks that he has problems or that the church to which he belongs has conflicts let him note, before he grumbles, the tribulations through which Calvin passed!

Lastly I would like to recommend a cassette recording of Prof. Edmund Clowney speaking on the subject of 'How to preach Christ from the Old Testament.' The reason for suggesting this is not only because this exposition explains how to interpret the Bible correctly but because it underlines the importance of biblical theology. Geerhardus Vos who was described by Professor Murray as 'the most incisive exegete who has appeared in the English-speaking world in this century' unhappily did not, in writing his book *Biblical Theology*,[26] display the essential gift of captivating his audience and impressing them with the fact that this subject is absolutely vital. Without biblical theology preachers can easily become merely moralists or 'pin' preachers who stick in a pin and having found a text, wrap a few blessed thoughts around it and call that preaching! For the uninitiated Vos is abstruse and turgid. He assumes that his readers understand his technical jargon and Latin as well. Preachers should be patient and study his book in spite of the tedium involved.

Prof. Clowney is not tedious and succeeds in getting the message of biblical theology across. Who knows, someone may yet write a scintillating book on biblical theology! You can obtain the cassette (£1.30 including postage) from Carey Recording Studios, c/o Mr. S. D. Hogwood, 13 Lucastes Avenue, Haywards Heath, Sussex, together with a catalogue of recordings made at the Whitefield Fellowship for ministers, the Carey Conference, and sermons from the Cuckfield pulpit.

These recommended books are all in print:

1. Commentary on James	Robert Johnstone	444 pp	£3.50	Banner
2. Expositions of St. Paul	Richard Sibbes	540 pp	£4.00	Banner
3. Revelation chs. 1-11	J. B. Ramsay	518 pp	£4.00	Banner

4.	Collected writings of John Murray Vol. 1. (The claims of Truth)		374 pp	£4.00	Banner
5.	Collected writings of John Murray Vol. 2. (Systematic Theology)		417 pp	£4.50	Banner
6.	The Christian Soldier Ephesians 6:10-20 (26 sermons)	D. M. Lloyd-Jones	363 pp	£3.50	Banner
7.	The Christian Warfare Ephesians 6:10-13 (26 sermons)	D. M. Lloyd-Jones	373 pp	£3.00	Banner
8.	The Christian in Complete Armour	William Gurnall	1240 pp	£4.95	Banner
9.	Satan Cast Out	Frederick Leahy	180 pp	£1.00	
10.	Demons in the World Today	Merrill F. Unger	209 pp		Coverdale
11.	Life in the Spirit in Marriage, Home and Work (26 sermons)	D. M. Lloyd-Jones	369 pp	£2.50	Banner
12.	Marriage in Honour	W. G. de Vries	185 pp	$6.95	Premier, Canada
13.	How to develop deep unity in the marriage relationship, How to read the Bible, How to pray effectively, being separate study manuals, prepared by Wayne Mack				Pres. & Ref.
14.	God Sent Revival	J. F. Thornbury	233 pp	£2.60	E.P.
15.	God's Outlaw, a biography of William Tyndale	Brian Edwards		£2.70	E.P.
16.	Survey of the Bible	William Hendriksen	497 pp	£5.95	E.P.
17.	Matthew Henry's Commentary on the whole Bible Unabridged in three volumes			£26.95 the set	E.P.
18.	Westminster Confession of Faith		438 pp	£3.00 cloth	E.P.
19.	A number of booklets (demy—that is large size) attractive and only 25p each, mainly by A. W. Pink but also by Spurgeon, Tiptaft and Adams				E.P.
20.	The Atonement	Hugh Martin	317 pp	£2.20 cloth	Knox Press Edinburgh
21.	Jeremiah	Alexander Stewart	276 pp	£1.25	Knox Press Edinburgh
22.	Pastoral Epistles	Patrick Fairbairn	451 pp	£11.95	James & Klock
23.	Paul—Apostle of the Free Spirit	F. F. Bruce	490 pp	£9.60	Paternoster
24.	The History of Christianity	Edited by T. Dowley	656 pp	£7.50	Lion
25.	Man of Geneva. The Story of John Calvin	E. M. Johnstone	129 pp	£1.00	Banner
26.	Biblical Theology	Geerhardus Vos	400 pp	£3.95	Banner

(*Continued from page 34*)

know how to work. They find functioning in the competitive world of Hong Kong difficult, to say the least. Many months of training are required before a full day's productive work can be expected of them. Back in China they were fed whether they were productive or not. Thus China under socialism has lost one of its most precious qualities. Untold millions ride the growing wagon of the state, instead of putting their shoulders to the wheel. It's much easier to ride and the rewards are equal—at least for the time being.

Marxism—a terrible and ruthless system

by Paul E. Kauffman who is President of Asian Outreach, Hong Kong, and editor of its 'Asian Report', from which this is reproduced.

EVERY MARXIST REGIME THE WORLD HAS YET SEEN HAS DEMONSTRATED absolute ruthlessness in eliminating all those whom they consider to be class enemies. This is doctrinaire Marxist philosophy. The reasoning goes something like this: 'Our goal is to create a perfect society. To achieve that goal, we must first "eliminate" the bad elements in our society.' Since Marxists believe there is no God, it follows that man has no soul, no eternal quality. Man is, in fact, a mere species of the animal kingdom—a mere step in the evolutionary process. 'Those who oppose Marxism must be eliminated for the good of our society—rather like killing rats. Once these obstacles are removed, we will be free to work at achieving our ultimate goal by the re-education of the remaining portion of the populace.'

There is no doubt whatsoever in the Marxist mind about this policy. Because of their atheism, the voice of conscience is no longer a consideration. As a result, untold millions of people have been, and are being, systematically eliminated by the Marxists over the last three-quarters of a century. Russia, Eastern Europe, China, Cuba and Indo-China have all followed, or are following, the same doctrinaire mass-murder procedure. And the end is not yet, despite the fact that all the evidence proves that Marxist ruthlessness is useless. The Marxists never seem to learn: perhaps they would rather not learn.

What is absolutely certain is that this doctrine of mass murder does not produce the desired results. To be realistic, one would have to murder virtually the whole human race in order to eliminate the problem elements in society. This is an age-old problem. King David faced it. He wrote, 'The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men . . . (He saw) they are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy' (Psa. 14:3). Even the God-instituted law, the Ten Commandments, did not solve the problem. 'The law made nothing perfect' (Rom. 7:18). God himself, through the gift of His Son Jesus Christ, represents the only solution to the problem. He alone can effectively eliminate the problem elements in human society. He does it by regeneration, not by homicide. Yet by 'murdering' God along with all other 'undesirables', the Marxists have eliminated their only hope for a better world.

Systematic slaughter

What is there in today's Asian news that occasions these observations? It is the fresh disclosures of the systematic slaughter of innocents in Laos

and Vietnam. Previously, the world was a reluctant eyewitness as the once gentle Cambodians, under French-trained Marxists, launched possibly the most brutal programme of national extermination yet seen. The most recent study of the communist takeover in Cambodia, estimated that 1.2 million people were murdered or died since the takeover—that's over 20 per cent of the population. And now the docile land of Laos is agonising along the same bloody trail. At least 200,000 Laotians out of a population of just over 3 million have fled in terror from the Marxists.

John Everingham, a British journalist married to a Lao girl, was recently expelled from Laos after living in its capital city for the past ten years. He reports that secret police, widespread arrests, and arbitrary justice are matters of everyday life. Tens of thousands are imprisoned in 'Re-education Camps'. Uncounted thousands have been sent off to 'corrective institutions' to 'reform' their social behaviour—many never to be seen again by their families. Everingham reports, 'The Laotian Communist Party's tough minded Marxist-Leninists have no time for religion. The Party now pays lip service to the nation's traditional Buddhism, but religion is destined to be drastically downgraded to a curiosity of the ancient past.' Other religions have not fared as well. Everingham himself was locked up in one of Saigon's former churches, now an internment camp. He reports the average government salary is only US$4 (£2.25) per month, consequently many are subsisting on little more than rice and salt.

Hanoi has just celebrated the second anniversary of the 'liberation' of the South. It was a sad day for most South Vietnamese. Those who can, are fleeing their homeland in increasing numbers. Some 7,000 have recently fled the country in leaking, definitely unseaworthy, junks, and have been lucky enough to have been rescued by passing ships in the open sea, and delivered safe to neighbouring South East Asian countries. How many perished, no one knows. These rescued refugees are creating space and logistic problems in an already over-crowded area. Over 700 junks made it to Thailand in the month of May alone. President Carter has just announced that the United States will accept another 15,000 Vietnamese refugees.

Hopeless

The *New York Times* recently reported, 'As many as 100,000 South Vietnamese are still being held in Re-education Camps, with little or no hope of release. Life is harsh, with only enough food to subsist on. Hard physical labour, long political indoctrination sessions, and frequent beatings.' *The Times* reported that a Vietnamese woman recently was permitted to visit her 36-year-old husband, a former army captain. She said, 'He is now a silver-haired old man. He has no hope.' Over 700,000 have been forced out of Saigon and 're-settled' in 'new economic zones'—in other words, uncleared jungle or scrub area—to eke out an

existence, if they can. Hanoi has said it plans to thus 'resettle' a total of 10 million people. A former South Vietnamese army soldier wrote to friends in the United States, 'We are now fish in the basket. They take care of the big fish first, then the smaller ones sooner or later.' Hopelessness is the order of the day.

Although the appearance of religious toleration is kept up in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), refugees from elsewhere in South Vietnam report increasing pressure on the church. Many churches have been converted into offices or schools under state control. All literature is now under state control. All Catholic seminaries are closed. No new priests are being trained. Religious holidays are banned outside Ho Chi Minh City.

All of this is painfully familiar. It is the accepted Marxist procedure. Karl Marx called force the 'midwife of history'. Since Mao's death, volume five of his *Selected Works* has been published in China. Random quotes from that volume of Mao's works make blood-curdling reading. Speaking of the extinction of capitalism he said, 'In this matter we have no conscience! Marxism is rough, it has little conscience. It wants to extirpate imperialism, feudalism, capitalism and small producers. In this matter it is good to have little conscience. We have some comrades who are too gentle, not severe. In other words they are not very Marxist.'

Volume five quotes Mao as saying, 'It can be estimated that the proportion of those who must be killed . . . should be 10 to 20 per cent.' (Question: Did he then kill more than 80 million people?) Belgian Sinologist Simon Leys claims that the Maoists executed 5 million people in the first three years of their rule. Mao wrote, 'Counter-revolutionaries (all who opposed Marxism) are worthless; they are vermin'. He once issued this directive. 'In suppressing the counter-revolution one must hit steadily, accurately, without mercy.' He explained the final phrase this way, 'To hit steadily means to pay attention to the policy. To hit accurately means to kill resolutely all reactionaries that must be killed.' He once took notice of democracy's opposition to his policy of murder, and commented thus: 'Should local bullies, evil despots, and counter-revolutionaries be killed or not? They must be killed. Some democratic gentlemen say that killing is wrong. We say killing is good.' (All these Mao quotes are from the recently published volume five.) Murder, then, is standard Marxist procedure.

My point is that, even aside from the very obvious flaunting of moral considerations, the Marxist policy of murder and ruthless repression has been a complete failure. None of Marxism's stated goals have been achieved by this policy of mass homicide. In other words, *it does not work!* It has not worked in China. It has not worked in the Soviet Union. Precisely the same problems still exist in those societies as exist in any other society. In China today the people must still be herded and controlled by the barrel of the gun. Certainly man's craving for God has not been eliminated by these forceful tactics. In fact, both

Russia and China are experiencing fresh spiritual awakenings. All the Marxist ruthlessness has proven useless. All the murder has not paved a way for a better society. No 'new man' has yet emerged in any Communist state. Yet all the new Marxist states embark on the same path of useless ruthlessness. Each seems to be convinced that they can succeed when everyone else has failed. Russian exile Andrei Amalric, referring to Karl Marx's statement that force is the 'midwife of history', said, 'Marxists never tire of promising the next child will be a splendid one. Even though this midwife perpetually delivers monsters and not normal children.'

So the river of blood continues to flow. Meanwhile other nations, notably in Africa, strive to be immersed in this same unredemptive Marxist fountain of blood. The Christian not only sees the utter futility of this Marxist ritual of human sacrifice, but he knows that God has provided the only proven method of human redemption. 'There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel's veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.' That knowledge is an awesome responsibility!

China destroys work ethic

One of the great tragedies coming to light in mainland China is the fact that the Chinese attempt at socialism has done much to destroy the once strong work ethic of the Chinese people. Traditionally, Chinese around the world have made a name for themselves as hard working, no-nonsense business men. A strong work ethic has enabled them to prosper wherever they have gone. The roots of that work ethic are to be found in the soil of ancient Confucian China where life was hard and demanding. Nothing came easy. Hard work was synonymous with goodness as well as survival.

Unfortunately all of this has changed in today's China. Survival is the responsibility of the state. The state provides the food. A man gets his rice whether he works hard or not. The incentive for hard work has been slowly eroded. At first the incentive was the chance to help in building a New China. Everyone's hopes were high. The adrenalin was flowing. Dramatic progress was made in projects which ranged from roads to irrigation. All of China rallied to the cause. Gradually, however, the faith of the people was undermined by the great gulf between propaganda promises and reality. The Great Proletarian Revolution destroyed what was left of the people's faith. Today farms are underproducing, factories are inefficient, railroads are frequently paralysed by strikes. In other words, the work ethic has been undermined.

This shows up very clearly in the young people who cross the border into Hong Kong, whether legally or illegally. As a rule of thumb, our experience and the experience of others is that these young people do not

(continued on page 30)

Hector Brooke— Encourager of the Young

A tribute to Hector Ryland Brooke (1900-1977) by Robert Oliver

A wide circle of Christian friends heard the news of Hector Brooke's death on 28th November 1977 with a sense of profound loss. He had counselled us, rebuked us, rejoiced in our joys, listened to our problems with concern, but above all he had prayed for us. He was so godly and yet so human with a fine sense of humour. Sharp at times, he was so honest himself that we were drawn to confide in him. How many had found his home near Bath and earlier at Malvern a place of outstanding Christian fellowship. He and his gracious wife always welcomed us warmly and so often we left refreshed and encouraged in a remarkable way. I thank God for the privilege of an intimate friendship, which lasted for over seventeen years and which proved to be such a blessing.

Mr. Brooke drew younger people to him, although he always seemed conscious of the approaching end of his life and longed to be with Christ. Indeed I never knew a man, whose whole life and praying displayed such a longing for his Redeemer. For many years he did not enjoy the fulness of assurance that he wanted, but God granted that in a wonderful and direct way in the closing months of his life.

Brought up in a Hyper-Calvinist home, he was converted as a boy, but backslid in the years of early manhood. He was restored and for many years accepted much of the Evangelicalism of the inter-war period. Soon after 1950, however, he found himself in a spiritual wilderness and at the same time in sore trouble. At this point only the doctrines of grace could speak to his need. He turned with profit to some of the older writers, whose works he had known earlier, but found to his sorrow that the Hyper-Calvinist preachers, for the most part, no longer had the power that he had known as a young man. It was then that God graciously brought him into contact with the new Reformed movement that was springing up in the land. He rejoiced in the ministry of Dr. Lloyd-Jones and in the Banner of Truth magazine and then the books that began to appear. Gradually he himself, as a result of reading and prayer, came to a more Biblical Calvinism. The Reformed faith became very precious to him. He was a convinced Baptist and his convictions intensified over the years, but he owed too much to Reformed Paedobaptists to be able to refuse communion with them. He was not naturally a patient man, but he came to have an increasing sympathy with all born again Christians. If they loved Christ, he loved them. Without faltering in his convictions, he read with considerable profit in his last years John Wesley's *Journals* and then the lives of his veterans.

Some indication of the love and esteem in which Mr. Brooke was held, was given by the people who travelled from all parts of Great Britain on 2nd December to the little chapel at Bathford for his funeral. There Iain Murray preached powerfully from Philippians 1:21. As we were so conscious of our loss in the death of so godly and so useful a man, we were made to rejoice in the grace of God which had made him what he was and which had secured his eternal joy.

An expression of gratitude from the editor

Four days before his death on 27th November, 1977, Hector Brooke wrote to *Reformation Today* to say 'as a religious community we are greatly indebted to you for this publication, which not only interests but instructs', and to the

editor, 'also for your many other activities, all of which are conducive to the well being of the churches'.

At the age of 77 he showed a keen interest in the work of reformation in all its aspects. His interest was general inasmuch as he felt for the well being of all the churches. It was also particular inasmuch as he saw the importance of contending for biblical doctrine and practice in detail. For instance, he heartily approved the inclusion of David Kingdon's article in *Reformation Today* issue 40, on the grounds that it is important for the Baptists to make plain and defend their position as biblical in a clear and scholarly way. This was of particular encouragement to the editors who are tempted to omit articles of a polemical character in favour of those more palatable to readers.

While showing an interest in all the details pertaining to reformation Mr. Brooke's great burden was for revival. He was deeply exercised that we should persevere in the truth and not give way to, or be distracted by, any counterfeit forms of revival. Not long ago he shared with an intimate friend an experience of fasting, 7 am to 4 pm, devoting the time to reading the Scriptures and being carried along in the Spirit to intercede widely and for many. This ability was given until the time stated. How many of us devote ourselves to exercises of this kind?

Hector Brooke was brought up in hyper-Calvinism. He professed faith but travelling abroad to Cuba he fell away into sinful attitudes and practices which eventually became as blatant as those recorded in the life of John Newton before his conversion. From this he eventually recovered, being brought among evangelicals. He recognised the first gleams of something dynamic when the old truths began to revive in the late 1950s. From that time he participated in the growth and spread of the Reformed faith by way of intelligent well-informed interest and unremitting prayer.

An idea of Mr. Brooke's ability to encourage the young can be seen in the fact that Robert Oliver, pastor at Bradford-on-Avon, regarded him as his closest friend and would travel to Mr. Brooke's home at Batheaston, Bath, about once a month for fellowship and counsel. Another busy pastor thought nothing of driving from one end of the country to the other to go and get spiritual refreshment by way of fellowship at Batheaston.

In the letter from which the quotation at the beginning was made Mr. Brooke concluded by saying, 'How very useless one feels oneself to be in comparison with the achievements of such as yourselves.' Well, our response is that we feel ourselves to achieve nothing at all. But if something lasting does emerge the human instrumentality will be due, under God, to the encouragement of those who truly appreciate that the weapons of this warfare are not carnal but spiritual. Some see the main issues for a while but when the race is long and exhausting they become discouraged. A few like Hector Brooke keep going to the end! If spared we would like to emulate his example of unwavering and constant personal support for those who strive within the whole of evangelicalism for the retention of the great central truths, which if lost, will result in a situation of darkness and confusion.

We record our gratitude to the Lord for the encouragement of such stalwarts as Hector Brooke.

Correspondence

From pastor Clayton Coles, minister of the Baptist Church in Amanzintoti, Natal. He writes, 'from what I have heard you have become very anti-South African.' The reply from the editor as follows:

Bearing in mind what James (see James 3) says about the tongue and particularly the tendency to exaggerate I had better make my own personal views plain being very grateful to you personally for the warning implicit in your comment. I would ask you to give me marks and tell me frankly just how anti-South African I am by telling me my score out of ten. Am I being anti-South African:

1. By regarding all indigenous non-whites as fellow South Africans?

2. By listening carefully to what chief Buthelezi has to say on behalf of four million Zulu people. (Listening only, I have not made any judgments)?

3. To question (to question merely while awaiting further facts) the morality of Bophuthatswana and the fate of two and a half million Tswana speaking people?

4. By believing that the Dutch Reformed Church (N.G. of Cape and Tvl.) should never have gone back on the anti-apartheid findings which they approved in 1961?

5. To reject constantly the imposition from outside upon South Africa of superficial, impractical, democratic solutions which do not work in other countries in general and in Africa in particular?

6. To enquire carefully into the policies of the Progressive party to see whether they can develop viable solutions? Could you tell me if you think it was anti-South African of 17.2 per cent of the whites to vote 'Progressive'? Remember that I have not come to conclusions but am enquiring into these matters believing that when a democratic process is in operation that a strong opposition is much better than a powerless one.

7. To declare that the humiliation, maltreatment and termination of life in detention of people who have not been proved guilty of any crime (and even if they had, biblical standards would still need to be maintained) is totally unacceptable, and to reject the insinuations that we can be silent about, or exonerate such things, on the grounds of security? In believing that if the Lord is angered by such malpractices there will indeed be no security (see Jeremiah 5:1 and 15)?

8. To believe that we are in no position to condemn the brutalities of Communism unless we ourselves are prepared to call for and maintain standards immeasureably higher than theirs?

9. To be sorry about the devastating effect that the detainee debacle has had upon the confidence of people outside South Africa who hitherto have been reasonably disposed to South Africa, and to wonder about and make enquiry into the real effects that these events have had upon black peoples both in and outside South Africa— *and most important*, what can be done as evangelical Christians to maintain confidence and lines of communication?

10. To take an interest in any moves by evangelical churches (since they alone can be expected to act as a nation's conscience) to call for justice and social righteousness, and lest I be judged an armchair observer, redoubling my own efforts to spread the Reformed faith among the peoples concerned?

If these attitudes be judged anti-South African then it will indicate that there has been a tragic polarisation which will surely prove unhelpful in the future.

Please add the question, 'is this anti-South African?' behind each question and send me my rating!

Stop Press

The Carey Publications title *The Believer's Experience* is now in circulation. Extremely relevant and attractively produced it is selling at £1.80. Since it is larger than was expected the price will be raised to £2.40 on March 1st.

Subsequent to a successful Carey Conference at Liverpool, further material is being added to the title *Local Church Practice.* Every effort is being made to produce this as soon as possible.

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